passing through certain villages of Manipur;

(b) whether some areas of India are taken by them in the construction of this road;

(c) whether the Indian Government have taken any action in this regard; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI KAMLA SINHA) : (a) No information is available of any road having been constructed by Myanmar passing through villages of Manipur.

(b) to (d) Does not arise.

[English]

Provident Fund Defaulters in U.P.

2377. SHRI AJAY CHAKRABORTY : Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether the regional Provident Fund Commissioner Uttar Pradesh has detected a large number of defaulters of employees Provident Fund and most of them belongs to export business houses in Agra, Lucknow and Kanpur;

(b) whether RPFC, U.P. has made out a comprehensive list of defaulters;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the penal action taken/proposed to be taken against the defaulters?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI M.P. VEERENDRA KUMAR) : (a) In Uttar Pradesh there are a number of EPF defaulters out of whom some belong to export business houses.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) The requisite details are being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House in due course.

(d) Necessary legal and penal action as provided under Section 7A, 8, 14 etc. of the Employees Provident Funds & Miscellaneous Provisions Act, is being taken for recovery of the dues outstanding against the defaulting establishments.

Software Adoption in Administration

2378. DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:
SHRI YELLAIAH NANDI:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government have issued directions to all the State and Central Government organisations to adopt "information technology software" in administration;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any project report has been received from Andhra State Government on "information technology software" in administration; and

(d) if so, the details of the report?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI S.R. BALASUBRAMONIYAN) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. In 1986, the Government issued directive to all the Central Government Departments to use NICNET of the National Informatics Centre (NIC) to adopt information technology software in administration and their other areas of work. NIC has signed Memorandum of Understanding with all State Governments and Union Territory Administrations for use of NICNET by them to adopt information technology software in administration and other areas of day-to-day operations.

(c) and (d) Yes, Sir. The proposals address the emerging paradigm of electronic governance being ushered in by information Technology and spell out some of the areas for undertaking pilot projects, internet applications and other information Technology applications which would help in providing a more convenient and citizen friendly interface with government.

[Translation]

Upliftment of Poor Below Poverty Line

2379. SHRI N.J. RATHWA : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have set a target for the upliftment of all the poor people livig below poverty line by the year 2005;

(b) if so, the estimated number of poor people living below the poverty line at present especially in Gujarat and the number out of them belong to SCs/STs; and

(c) the year-wise number of the poor people targetted to be uplifted above the poverty line?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION (SHRIMATI RATNAMALA D. SAVANOOR): (a) Government.

in its Common Approach to Major Policy Matters and a Minimum Programme has stated that the anti-poverty programmes will be redesigned to ensure generation of more employment, creation of assets, imparting productive skills and raising the incomes of the very poor so that a significant number is brought above the poverty line every year and poverty is abolished by the year 2005.

(b) The Planning Commission estimates the incidence of poverty from the quinquennial National Sample Survey data on consumer expenditure. As per the latest available estimates, 320.37 million people live below the poverty line in 1993-94. The number of people living below the poverty line in Gujarat is estimated as 10.52 million in 1993-94. In Gujarat, the percentage of population living below the poverty line among the SCs in 1993-94 are 32.26% in rural areas and 14.99% in urban areas and the same among the STs are 31.20% in rural areas and 35.47% in urban areas.

(c) The targets for the number of poor people to be uplifted above the poverty line are not set annually.

Free Medical Facilities to SCs/STs

2380. SHRI MANIKRAO HODLYA GAVIT:
SHRI PARASRAM BHARDWAJ:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether any comprehensive scheme is being implemented in the country particularly in Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh to provide free medical facilities to scheduled castes and scheduled tribes;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the number of families benefited under the scheme in each State particularly in Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh since its introduction; and

(d) if not, whether the Government propose to introduce such a scheme for the welfare of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY): (a) to (d) Information is being collected and will be laid on the table of the House.

[English]

Kashmir Issue

2381. SHRI SANAT KUMAR MANDAL: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

[illegible]

visited Mpscow during the last month urged Russia to "guide and direct" its ongoing talks with India on Kashmir issue; and

(b) if so, the Indian Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI KAMLA SINHA) : (a) Yes Sir. The Pakistan Foreign Minister addressing a Press Conference on 8th July, 1997, at the conclusion of his visit to Russia last month, had reportedly sought help, guidance, direction from Russia for reaching a peaceful settlement of the Jammu & Kashmir issue.

(b) It is Government's consistent policy that all issues between Indian and Pakistan should be resolved bilaterally. This ruled out any third party intervention of any sort. India's principled position has received wide support in the international community, including by Russia.

[Translation]

Rehabilitation of Kasnmiri Pandits

2382. SHRI KRISHAN LAL SHARMA : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) the number of Kashmiri Pandits and others who were rendered homeless rehabilitated after the new Government has taken the charge in Jammu and Kashmir;

(b) whether any target has been fixed for rehabilitation of displaced person by the end of 1997 and if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the terrorists have attacked the rehabilitated people;

(d) if so, the number of persons killed and injured in terrorist attacks;

(e) whether the Government have taken any concrete steps to check the atrocities of the terrorists; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS. (SHRI S.R. BALASUBRAMONIYAN) : (a) No Kashmiri migrant family has returned to the Kashmir Valley after the installation of the new Government in the State.

(b) The State Government is preparing an action plan for return of Kashmiri migrants to their native places and they have informed that the process is likely to take